

Philip Morris Website

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Cigarette Smoking and Disease in Smokers: (February 29, 2000)

There is an overwhelming medical and scientific consensus that cigarette smoking causes lung cancer, heart disease, emphysema and other serious diseases in smokers. Smokers are far more likely to develop serious diseases, like lung cancer, than non-smokers. There is no "safe" cigarette. These are and have been the messages of public health authorities worldwide. Smokers and potential smokers should rely on these messages in making all smoking-related decisions.

Choose from the following for more detailed information from public health authorities on cigarette smoking and disease in smokers:

Highlights and conclusions from the following U.S. Surgeon General's reports:

1964, 1979, 1980, 1983, 1984, 1994

For further information, click on the links below:

The 1998 U.S. Surgeon General's Report

The World Health Organization

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control

The American Cancer Society

Cigarette Smoking and Addiction

Cigarette smoking is addictive, as that term is most commonly used today. It can be very difficult to quit smoking, but this should not deter smokers who want to quit from trying to do so.

Information about quitting smoking.

Additional information from public health authorities on cigarette smoking and addiction is available on this page. Here are a few examples:

"The determination that cigarettes and other forms of tobacco are addicting is based on standard criteria used to define drugs as addicting." (U.S. Surgeon General)

"The World Health Organization has classified smoking as an addiction." (World Health Organization)

"...the nicotine in cigarettes and smokeless tobacco causes and sustains addiction." (U.S. Food and Drug Administration)

Choose from the following for more detailed information from public health authorities on cigarette smoking and addiction:

Highlights and conclusions of the Surgeon General's 1988 report

Excerpts from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's findings relating to addiction

PM3003572354

Additional information from the World Health Organization

Read our policy regarding links.

Secondhand Smoke

Site Policy

Our Actions to Reduce Unwanted ETS

Addressing the Problem. We know that environmental tobacco smoke (often referred to as "secondhand smoke," "passive smoke" or "ETS") can be unpleasant and annoying, and that many people believe that it presents a health risk to nonsmokers. That is why we strongly support - through a variety of actions and programs - options designed to minimize unwanted ETS, while still providing adults with pleasant and comfortable places to smoke. These options provide tools that help establishments cater to their customers' diverse expectations regarding smoking, because, despite the health issues surrounding ETS, a sizable segment of the adult population continues to support accommodation. If you want to see examples of how both nonsmokers and smokers may be comfortably accommodated:

Information about PM USA's Options Initiative.

Health Concerns.

Government agencies have concluded that ETS causes disease - including lung cancer and heart disease - in nonsmokers. We recognize and accept that many people have health concerns regarding ETS. In addition, because of concerns relating to conditions such as asthma and respiratory infections, we believe that particular care should be exercised where children are concerned, and that smokers who have children - particularly young ones - should seek to minimize their exposure to ETS. If you want to find out more information about ETS and reported health effects in nonsmokers:

Information about ETS, lung cancer and heart disease.

Information about ETS and children.

For opinions regarding the relationship between science and politics, select from the links below:

Reason Online

The Cato Institute.

Government Regulation. Smoking restrictions are appropriate in a variety of contexts to help minimize unwanted ETS. At the same time, we think it's important that business owners, particularly in the hospitality sector, continue to be permitted to make decisions about whether and where to allow smoking. If you want to find out more:

Some thoughts on reasonable smoking restrictions.

ETS, Lung Cancer and Heart Disease

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Many scientists and regulators have concluded that ETS poses a health risk to nonsmokers. Even though we do not agree with many of their conclusions, below we have provided some links so you can access some of their views.

Government Reports. Government authorities that have examined the question - including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - have concluded that ETS not only increases the risk, but has been established as a cause, of lung cancer in nonsmokers. Choose from the following to read portions of the reports on this subject published by:

[The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#)

[The U.K.'s Scientific Committee on Smoking and Health](#)

[Australia's National Health and Medical Research Council](#)

[The California Environmental Protection Agency](#)

Moreover, some of these reports assert that ETS exposure causes other diseases, including heart disease and asthma, in nonsmokers.

Participants in the tobacco industry, including Philip Morris USA, challenged the portions of the U.S. EPA risk assessment of ETS relating to lung cancer in Federal court. The court - in a decision that EPA is now appealing - rejected the EPA assessment, largely based on findings that the agency did not adhere to applicable legal requirements and failed to adequately explain its results. The court said that EPA "publicly committed to a conclusion before the research had begun...and aggressively utilized [its] authority to disseminate findings to establish a de facto regulatory scheme intended to restrict [cigarettes] and to influence public opinion." Read the full text of the court's opinion.

Scientific Studies. Many studies investigating the question of whether exposure to ETS increases nonsmokers' risk of contracting lung cancer or heart disease report a small increased risk of these diseases for nonsmokers married to smokers (and, thus, presumably exposed to ETS).

Choose from the following for information about these studies, as well as those that do not report an increased risk:

[Article about studies relating to ETS, lung cancer and heart disease](#)

[More references on this topic](#)

One of the largest and most prominent examples of this type of study is the one published by IARC, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (an affiliate of the World Health Organization), which reported small increases of relative risk (that were not statistically significant) for lung cancer. The report specifically noted a "lack of an effect of 'social' sources in our study," meaning that an increased risk was not detected based on exposure to ETS in places like restaurants. [Click here](#) to read the abstract of IARC's study

The Importance of Exposure Levels. Actual exposure to ETS is an important point that should be considered in any discussion regarding smoking restrictions. Recent studies in this area indicate that exposure levels outside the home are lower than regulators have generally assumed.

Choose from the following to learn about studies detailing real-world exposure levels:

[Bibliography of studies](#)

[Jenkins and Counts Study](#)

Samet Study

Young Children and ETS

We believe that particular care should be exercised where children are concerned, and that smokers who have children - particularly young ones - should seek to minimize their exposure to ETS.

A number of studies have reported increased relative risks for children - especially young ones - living in smoking households of contracting conditions such as cough, wheeze, otitis media (middle ear infection) and lower respiratory infection. Moreover, some studies suggest that ETS exposure could be one of many agents that can make episodes in asthmatic children more severe. There are also studies that report an association between parental smoking and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

Choose from the following for surveys relating to ETS and these conditions in children:

A survey of ETS and children

Bibliography of selected studies relating to ETS and conditions in children

If a child is present who is asthmatic or often experiences conditions such as cough, wheeze, lower respiratory infection or otitis media, we would encourage parents to consider whether or not that child should be exposed to any significant amount of ETS. Parents who have questions about this issue should consult with their child's physician.

Reasonable Public Smoking Restrictions

We think that, in a tolerant society, three principles should guide the issues of smoking restrictions and bans:

Reason. Smoking should not be allowed in crowded, closed spaces such as elevators; in places where there is a specific fire hazard; or in rooms primarily occupied by children, such as classrooms and daycare facilities. In public places where smoking is allowed, good ventilation is an important way to keep the area comfortable for everyone. And, except in very particular circumstances, reason dictates that smoking not be restricted outdoors.

Minimal Unwanted ETS. People should be able to avoid being around unwanted amounts of ETS, particularly in places where they must go, such as public buildings, many areas in the workplace and public transportation. These areas should accommodate people who are bothered by or have health concerns about ETS, but where possible should take into account the preferences of adults who choose to smoke as well. So long as unwanted exposure is minimized, we think that reasonable people should be able to agree that concerns regarding ETS can be addressed without banning smoking.

Adult Choice. Owners of restaurants, bars, casinos and other hospitality venues should be permitted to choose what kind of smoking policies to adopt for their establishments - to provide separate smoking and nonsmoking sections; to designate separate rooms for smoking; not to permit smoking at all or to provide sufficient ventilation so that smokers and nonsmokers can comfortably share the same space. Likewise, consumers should be able, based on what they are comfortable with and the degree to which they have health concerns regarding ETS, to decide their preferences regarding public smoking and to choose accordingly.

Read our policy regarding links.

Youth Smoking Prevention | Cigarette Marketing Practices | Health Issues for Smokers | Quitting Smoking | Secondhand Smoke

Site Policy

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